

REPORT

OF

INVESTIGATION

OF

McALISTERVILLE SOLDIERS' ORPHAN SCHOOL

BY

JOHN M. GREER,

STATE INSPECTOR.

ALSO REPORT OF DR. W. H. HOOPES, RESIDENT PHYSICIAN,
REPORT OF DR. LUCIEN BANKS, CONSULTING PHYSICIAN,
AS TO THE SANITARY CONDITION OF SCHOOL,
WITH AN APPENDED PETITION OF CITIZENS.

HARRISBURG:

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DEPARTMENT OF SOLDIERS' ORPHAN SCHOOLS,
HARRISBURG, PA., *March 11, 1889.*

To all whom it may concern :

The recent difficulty connected with the Orphan School at McAlisterville, has been very much exaggerated. So much notoriety, however, has been given to it, and such bold condemnation of the school and its entire management has been so sedulously kept before public attention, and so little has been said which is based upon any inspection of the school, or upon any familiar acquaintance with its actual work, that I have felt constrained to publish the following reports and statements of those whose knowledge of the school has come from direct official inspection and every day personal experience.

All the official reports of the inspectors, Mrs. E. E. Hutter, Rev. J. W. Sayers, Mrs. Mira Attick, and Hon. J. M. Greer, which are on file in the office, and the uniform statements of respectable citizens, whose honesty cannot be impeached, only confirm the conviction which I have had all along, that the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville, from the time of its management by Mr. Wright, has been excellent. I have regarded it as one of the best managed schools under my supervision. I have so stated over and over again, and once under oath. I have done this not only upon the strength of frequent reports from inspectors, and physicians, and citizens, but upon most rigid personal examination and inspection of its whole management from beginning to end.

It is due to the management of this school, under Mr. Wright, that I should say that the death rate has been during his time, a fraction less than three to the thousand. Inspector Greer's statement, which makes it about eight to the thousand, includes the whole time of its management from its very beginning.

I trust and believe that the following printed reports and statements will serve to correct the gross misstatements which have been circulated, and lessen the force of the unjust and unwarranted prejudices aroused against the school, and against myself for not disbanding it.

E. E. HIGBEE,
Superintendent of Soldiers' Orphan Schools.

BUTLER, PA., *March 5th, 1889.*

HON. E. E. HIGBEE, LL D., *Superintendent Soldiers' Orphan Schools:*

DEAR SIR: I beg leave to submit the following report of my investigation at the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville, made on the first and second of this month. I reached the ground in the evening, and was not long there until I was thoroughly convinced that the children had been shamming.

I made a full investigation of the matter as far as I knew how. I took the statements of the children who claimed to have this disease, and a great many other children who were larger and older. I also took the statements of the Rev. Lewey, of the Presbyterian church; Rev. Leshar, of the Lutheran church; Judge Watts, now postmaster; Judge Smith, a former teacher in the school; Washington McAlister, Stephen McAlister, Thomas K. Beaver, Mr. and Mrs. Sharon, Mrs. Dr. McAlister, Mr. Musser, Mr. Jamieson, Mr. Ammerman, Mr. Spidler, Miss Close, the young lady who it was alleged was driven away from the school on account of not receiving enough to eat; Mrs. Cox, the mother of two children in the school; Mr. and Mrs. Woods, from New Florence, Westmoreland county, who had gone to visit a brother of Mrs. Woods, an inmate of the school; Miss Williams, the matron of the school; Miss Irvine, the dining room lady; Mr. Sherwood, the principal, and others, for the purpose of getting as much light as possible upon the management of the school. I arrived at the following state of facts:

Mr. Wright came to the school on the 16th of February. At that time there were ten or twelve children down in bed claiming to be attacked. The next day they were all up and in school; every one of them having admitted that they were shamming—as they called it “playing off crazy.”

Gus Spidler was the first boy to commence it. He tells the whole story as will be found in his statement hereto attached. He says he had no intention of playing off at the time he commenced. He was in the dormitory after the other boys had retired, and was having some fun throwing the pillows and pulling off the covering, and one of the boys said “Put him out;” another said, “Put him out, he's crazy.” and he says the thought struck him that he would just play off crazy. So he laid still and played crazy, and he did it so well that the boys were alarmed. They sent for Mr. Coover, the male attendant, but he was not there. They then brought in Prof. Sherwood, who showed considerable excitement; tried to rouse him but failed. He then sent for Dr. Hoopes, who came, and suggested that they bring a basin of cold water and bathe him, which they did. This made him shiver some but failed to relieve him of his trouble. The next day he went home. His mother and father both believed he was shamming and immediately sent him back to the school. While at home his father suggested that if he had any more such attacks he would apply Dr.

Fisher's remedy—that is, give him a whipping and set him on ice, and said he thought that would relieve him. Gus went back to school, remained a week and took another spell; was as bad as ever. His father went after him but he refused to go home with him, and they couldn't get boys enough to carry him home. Sometime after that when he went home his father suggested that the reason he didn't come home was, that he was afraid he would apply Dr. Fisher's cure, and Gus says he turned his head around for fear his father would see him laughing.

He makes a full, clear, and precise statement of the whole matter, from beginning to end; says that there was nothing in the world wrong with him; that he had no intention of playing off crazy when he commenced, but that when he got started he was afraid to back down, and thought he had better carry it out.

Every boy makes a full confession—as full as Spitler's, and they all say they made the confession of their own free will. They also say there was no nervousness about them, and no involuntary action, and I have no doubt of the truth of their present statement. From the fact they say they were shamming, and from the further fact that they all got up from their beds the next day after Mr. Wright made his appearance—the very worst cases—fully convinces me that they were shamming; that there was nothing wrong with them, and I have no hesitation in so reporting to you.

When I made my first visit about three weeks ago I had conversations with Tilden Limes, John Scott, Thomas McDowell, Cloyd McCoy, Wallace Galbreath, Howard Snyder, and several others who were “playing off crazy.” At this visit they could all tell me what was said and done; they could repeat my questions and their answers correctly, and even tell me some of their pranks. One of the most amusing things is the conversation between Randall Scott and Wallace Galbreath at the wood pile, just before they commenced playing off. These two boys diagnosed the case in a very few minutes. Several of the boys say they would not have thought of shamming had Mr. Wright been there; that they knew he would detect them.

In view of the fact that there has been a great deal of criticism on the management of this school during the last few weeks I concluded I would find out all that was in my power, so I took the statements of the persons above named, and received some letters from G. A. R. men at Post No. 134 at Mifflintown, and attach them with the statements of the boys and girls of the school, making them part of this report, in support of my views as to the management of the school.

I do not know that there is anything I can say as regards the buildings and grounds, dormitories, beds, kitchen and dining room, and scholars, different from what I said in my last report. I must repeat, that the institution from top to bottom is as clean as it is possible for any building to be. Also, that the three dormitories in the large

building—in which the girls sleep—are large and in excellent order. The beds are straw, but they are comfortable and exquisitely clean. The dormitories in the older building are not so good, but they are equally as clean, and the beds are fully as comfortable. The dining room tables were covered with the cleanest of table cloths, and the dishes are good and all that are necessary. I found nothing wrong with the sanitary condition.

The girls department has for years been under the management of Miss Anna McKillip, who is now at Chester Springs Soldiers' Orphan School, and who has no superior as a matron in the State. The boys were managed until lately by Mr. Wydell, male attendant, who is also at Chester Springs.

I examined the boys carefully, and I find each boy has a good new suit, and he has a second-best suit, that to all appearance is a new suit. The boys are inspected and if any one is found to have shoes not blackened, or a button off, or a suspender broken, without a neck-tie or a speck of dirt upon him as large as a pea, he is put upon the "slouch line" and allowed no play for the day. There are very few boys upon the "slouch line." They also have a league or organization among themselves, and have what they call the "bad line." If any boy behaves in a manner that they think unbecoming a member of the McAlisterville Soldiers' Orphan School, he is placed upon the "bad line," and to the boy it is very humiliating.

The details that are on work are obliged to put on their old or working-suit, and when seen at work they do not appear so nicely, but they have two good clean suits in reserve. The girls are excellently kept. The children are not only clean and well clad, but they present an excellent appearance. They are exceedingly polite and good-mannered. They are kind and gentle with each other, and pleasant and polite to all strangers who pass or visit them.

From the statements I have taken in the neighborhood, and from the members of the school, there has been but one quarrel in six years; they are never heard using profane or bad language—not even cross language. They do not disturb the farmers or neighbors, and will not enter a field of one of the citizens without first having obtained leave. Mr. Musser who owns the farm adjoining the school grounds says that when he mowed his grass last summer, under the hay he found twelve balls that had gone over the fence into his meadow, and the boys had never crossed after them. When he mowed they stood on the fence and looked over, and one would say "There's my ball," and another "There's mine," and so on, but never went after the balls until they asked permission. Mr. Thomas Beavers says they came to his place for apples last fall; that they passed the orchard where the apples were and crossed over several fields to find him—traveling at least three-quarters of a mile from the orchard to first obtain leave from him.

Rev. Lesher, who lives close to the playground, and can see the children playing from his study, says that in the last three years he has never heard a profane, rough, rude or cross word, and never saw the least unkindness. Judge Watts, the postmaster, says that the boys come to the post-office and are very polite and mannerly. They ask for their mail or deposit their letters, and as soon as they are through go directly home. They are perfect little gentlemen. Mr. Washington McAlister says that he has observed the boys, that they are remarkably good, polite and kind, well clothed and appear to be well fed and kindly treated. The same statement is made by Stephen McAlister, Thomas K. Beaver, Mrs. Dr. McAlister, E. L. Jamieson, and all the persons making the statements.

I have every reason to believe that the children are properly fed. I made special inquiry as to this from all the parties whose statements I took, and they every one say they believe them to be well supplied with provisions and food. They speak of their being contented and happy and say they are fat and hearty. They also say that the children could not be in this condition if they were lacking food. Many of them have eaten there and tested the pudding in the regular way.

The statements show that the children attend church and Sunday school, and that they are better clothed and present a better appearance than the ordinary children in the neighborhood—some say, better than any of the children in the neighborhood—and that their manners, behavior, conduct and general appearance, is much superior to the ordinary children outside the school; and that they have no complaints and hear none outside the newspapers. Stephen McAlister says a mass meeting could be had in a few hours to indorse the management, which is better now than ever before.

Mrs. Cox, one of the parties referred to above, as being the mother of two of the children attending this school, states that her children have been there four years; that she is perfectly satisfied with the way they have been treated, and believes that they have had an abundance of food.

Mr. Stephen Woods and his wife, of New Florence, Westmoreland county, from reading the newspapers believed that the school had gotten into a terrible condition, and left home for the purpose of finding out how Harry Henderson (a brother of Mrs. Woods) was faring. They were perfectly surprised to find the school in the condition that it is. They say the children present a better appearance and are in better condition than their neighbor's children at home.

I also visited Miss Close, who had been a teacher in this school for some two months during the winter, and had gone home. She is the lady that some of the papers stated had left the school because she could not get enough to eat. She assures me that the statement is absolutely false; that she never made such a statement; but on the con-

trary she believes the management of the school to be excellent; that there is an abundance of provisions supplied, and that the cooks are not limited as to amount.

I asked every boy who had been "playing off crazy" whether or not he had received food enough, and every one of them answered in the affirmative. Several of them said that if any boy left the table without enough to eat it was his own fault. They all say that the provision is good. One boy said that Mr. Wright often told them that if the waiters overlooked them or didn't help them, to go to Mr. Sherwood and he would see that they were supplied.

I examined eight or twelve boys, and from twelve to sixteen girls who were not shamming, and they make the same statement as to food and treatment. The cook and the dining-room lady both informed me that they are not in any way limited as to amount they are to cook, and say that Mr. Wright supplies abundantly of the very best provisions; that he is prompt to order and liberal as to amount.

The butcher who furnished the meat has until lately been furnishing seventy pounds a day or 490 pounds a week, and this includes no neck, flank, shank or hock. Besides this the school killed some twelve hogs last fall that produced about 3,300 pounds of pork. I compared their meat supply with that of private families, where there are no working men, and find the supply about the same, and I think their share equally as large as that used by my son at home.

I carefully examined the grocery bills and find large purchases of ham, fish, lobsters, cheese and other substantials, as well as tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, rice, cracked corn, hominy, rolled wheat, oat meal, corn meal, dried peas, white beans, Lima beans, canned beans, canned peas, canned corn, dried corn, pickles, chow chow, canned plums, canned pears, canned peaches, dried peaches, dried apples, dried cherries, dried blackberries, dried currants, raisins, corn starch, cearaline, tapioca, and all the groceries that would be needed to supply a table with healthful and desirable food. The bread was very much better than at the last visit made by me, but it was not purely white. With this exception I could find no fault with it. I took the trouble to call upon the miller who ground the flour and he informed me that it was of the very best grade and quality, and that he supplied the whole country from Misflintown to McAlisterville and Thompson-town. On my last visit the meals were: Breakfast: gravy, oat meal, bread and butter, fruit, coffee, syrup. Supper: roasted potatoes, bread and butter, tea, fruit and syrup, and for dinner: boiled beef soup, dumpling stew, and bread. They say that the children want syrup at every meal and get it. They get butter twice a day, and meat once a day, and if any is left over from dinner it is put on the table for supper. Coffee for breakfast, tea for supper, and always one hot dish at every meal.

From what I could see and learn, and from the statements of these ladies and gentlemen, who are entirely disinterested, and whom I have every reason to believe, as well as the statements of the children themselves, made freely and voluntarily, and from their appearance and makeup, their contentment, happiness and playfulness, I must come to the conclusion that *the school is well managed ; that the children are well fed and well cared for ; that they are also well taught in the English branches, as well as morality and religion ; that they are trained to walk erectly, speak properly, and act politely, and that their sense of honor is very highly developed.*

By examining the death rate in the report of the Superintendent of Soldiers' Orphan Schools for the year 1886, it will be observed that the death-rate in this school is less than eight to the thousand, less than the ordinary death-rate, and there is less sickness than in a like number outside of the school.

It is true that their record is somewhat blurred by the fact of their "playing crazy." It was started as a boyish trick and kept up as a matter of fun and sport, and by some of them to get off school and get into the infirmary, or be allowed to slide and skate. The boys who were not engaged in this are exceedingly indignant that their reputation is to be thus injured.

I have heard of students in colleges—even in theological seminaries—playing tricks that were equally as bad. *I have always looked on this as being one of the best Soldiers' Orphan Schools in the State, and I have not changed my mind.* I think the school equally as good as it was on the day of examination last May when you were present. If the old building was repaired to be equal to the new one, it would certainly then be one of the best Soldiers' Orphan Schools in the State.

If this school must fall by reason of bad management and by improper care and treatment of the children, then not another Soldiers' Orphan School in the State can justly stand. To disband this school on account of the management would be unfairly discriminating against it.

It is true it is one of the schools owned by the so-called syndicate and perhaps that is one of the reasons for its unfavorable reputation.

The syndicate, as it is called, is composed of George W. Wright and John I. Gordon, of Mercer, who are partners, doing business as Wright & Gordon, and all the business they do has been done by them as partners. They own the one-half interest in the Mercer school; and they own the personal property of the McAlisterville school; they own the Mt. Joy school, and one-half interest in Chester Springs school. The other half interest in this school is owned by Theodore Hunter, of Phoenixville, and the other half of the Mercer school by Samuel F. Thompson, and I believe a gentleman named R. R. Wright.

The Superintendent of Soldiers' Orphan Schools, by virtue of the law regulating them, makes contracts with these persons to board, clothe and take care of the children under their charge. For all children over ten years of age he pays \$150 a year, and for all children under ten years of age \$115.

The one-sixth of the amount paid for each one of the children must be expended in clothing, leaving five-sixths for their boarding, teaching and other expenses.

I cannot speak for anything that occurred before I was appointed inspector of the schools, but since I entered upon the duties of that office I believe the gentlemen in charge of these schools have fully kept their contract with the Superintendent of Soldiers' Orphan Schools. If they have what difference can it make to the children or to the State, whether the children are supported by one man or by a partnership consisting of two men? Some persons raise an objection to persons managing more than one school. The objection may be well founded, but from my observation I have failed to find it so. There are some reasons why it may be to the advantage of the schools that more than one should be under the management of the same person or firm. A man having a large amount of business, and providing for a large number of children is enabled to make purchases, and provide supplies at a less cost than the man who supplies but a small number. These four schools are now managed entirely by Major George W. Wright. A principal is placed at the head of each school, and Major Wright devotes his time to making the purchases, laying in the supplies and attending to the business matters for the four schools. I have been credibly informed that he has been solicited by the Department to take charge of the management of Mt. Joy, in 1877; McAlisterville, 1883; and Chester Springs, 1888.

All the parties that have made statements to me have expressed their opinion as very favorable to Major Wright's management. The McAlisterville school is in charge of Mr. J. M. Sherwood. I have every confidence in his ability and willingness to manage the school properly. He is a good scholar and teacher; a man of executive ability and high moral and christian character. He is exceedingly industrious and a man of sympathetic heart. I think the trouble with those boys "playing crazy" is due partly to his sympathy; they took advantage of his kindness of heart.

Miss Gertie Williams, the matron, says, that she has been at Harford, Chester Springs, and at the Quaker, or "Friends School," at West Chester; has had twenty-one years' experience; that she considers Mr. Wright an excellent manager and that the management of this school is as good as any she ever saw—better than "Friends' School," and that it is abundantly supplied with everything.

From the facts that I have obtained and the investigation that I

have made. *I still retain the opinion that the management at this school is very good ; that the children are well clothed, fed, taught, and kindly treated, and that the persons in charge of the school have kept their contract with the State.*

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN M. GREER,
Inspector and Examiner.

Judge SAMUEL WATTS:

I now live at McAlisterville; am the postmaster; was associate judge of this county for five years; I have always lived near the town even before this school was in existence; some years ago we used to be very much troubled with the children running over the farms, disturbing us, taking fruit, berries and cherries, and tramping down the grain and grass; but positively for the last five or six years the children could not have been better kept; they are nice, clean and respectable; they are splendidly clothed; if there is anything wrong their clothes are too good; they are always neat; there is not a day but what they are in the post-office, some of them; they come in nicely and have good manners; talk nice and kind; more so than any of the other children in the town and country; they speak very intelligently and manly; they show no rudeness or roughness in my office, or on the street or on their play ground; I often pass their play grounds, and they are always nice and in a good humor, salute me with a military salute and say kind things; they are contented and happy and seem to love the school; I never heard a word of complaint from one of them; they look fat and hearty and I believe they are well fed; if they were not well fed they would not look so pleasant; in everything they are very much better than the other children in the neighborhood; their letter backing is always in good order—much superior to that of the children in the town of the same age; their writing is plain, neat and business-like; they generally put the stamp on the upper right hand corner; I have never seen a nicer lot of children in my life; *there is not any reason for this newspaper clamor; it is all founded on falsehood and prejudice; I am provoked at it;* I have seen their beds; they are clean and comfortable, and very good; their sleeping rooms are all very clean and comfortable; they are well aired and well lighted, and very much better than we get in an ordinary country hotel—better even than in a small town, and superior to that of the children here in the country; *I don't believe a word of this story of starvation and dirt; it is a lie and there is not a word of truth in it;* the best people in this country claim that this school is under the best kind of management; well kept, and that the children are well fed and well looked after; *the only complaints we get are from the newspapers;* when I was a boy at home—there were ten of us—we never had any such good rooms or bed and no such comforts.

E. L. JAMIESON:

I live near the McAlisterville Soldiers' Orphan School; the school was never as good as it now is; I believe it to be the duty of a good citizen living in this vicinity to look after the schools; there has been so much talk about syndicates and men running these schools for the purpose of speculation that I thought it my duty to keep my eye on this school specially, and see whether there was any complaints from

the children or any reason to complain; I did so, and I find this to be an excellent school; the children are the best governed of any I ever saw; the boys are mannerly and polite, and very neat and tasty in their dress; the children are all kept very clean; I believe they have plenty to eat; if they did not they couldn't present the appearance they do; they are fat, hearty and pleasant; the school is in much better condition than it was under the old rule; the buildings are very clean; the beds are clean and neat and good.

I have mixed up with the children a great deal, and I never heard a single complaint from a child nor heard of a complaint. The citizens in this vicinity sustain this school. They are all in sympathy with its government. The boys govern themselves to a great extent. They are polite and manly. They are not allowed to run over the town or country. They have come to my place for fruit in the fall, and I always gave it to them when convenient. If it didn't suit to give them any they showed no signs of sullenness or crossness, but bid me good-bye and went home like gentlemen. I cannot see how any improvement can be made upon the management of this school.

The children have less sickness to the number—much less so than the other children in the neighborhood, and they are more intelligent. They go to Sunday school and church and their behavior and conduct is remarkable. They seem to be in advance of the children outside of the school.

Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood are excellent people, and no better principal could be obtained for the school than Mr. Sherwood. Miss McKillip, the matron that was here for the last year or two was an excellent lady, and she has been succeeded by Miss Gerty Williams, who is a good matron. The faculty I think does its whole duty.

STEPHEN McALISTER :

I live in McAlisterville, near the school; see the children every day; think the school is excellently managed; I don't see how it can be improved; I wish the Investigation Committee of the Legislature would come here on the ground and see for themselves; if they could hear the children and the people talk they would know more about it.

They are splendid children; polite, good manners, kind and fine looking; clean, neat and tasty; they are very intelligent and bright; I am often with them; they are well dressed; I think they are better dressed—a good deal better clothes than any of our town children have; I know that they are well fed; they appear fat and hearty, and have very little sickness; less than the ordinary children in the neighborhood; since Wright came I have heard no complaint from them; the buildings are very clean; the beds are very good and supplied with abundance of covering; I never heard a boy swear or use bad language, and saw no quarreling; no cross words; the boys do not run over the town and country; they are very careful not to disturb the neighbors;

they do not enter the fields or orchards without leave ; when on an errand they attend to it promptly and return like men ; their conduct and behavior is remarkably good ; the people here generally hold the school in very high esteem ; a mass meeting of the people could be had in a very short time to support the school ; these newspaper stories are not true ; if the children were not well fed they would not present the appearance that they do, and they would certainly show some signs of want.

Rev. GEORGE W. LESHER :

I am pastor of the Lutheran Church at McAlisterville ; I have been for three years ; I live in sight of the soldiers' orphan school. My house is within two hundred yards of it ; I am often with the children and see a great deal of them ; I never saw a more manly and better-behaved set of boys in my life anywhere, and the girls are excellent. They are all neatly clothed and always so clean and nice ; they are very happy and contented, and are fat and hearty, and do not show the least signs of want of food or care ; they are very polite ; when I pass the ordinary school house when there is snow on the ground, I expect to get some snow balls, but those boys never do any such a thing ; when I pass they salute me—even the very little fellows ; they all speak kindly ; I can see and hear them in their play ground from my study window, and I never heard a rough, rude, angry or profane word—not even a cross word ; I never saw a quarrel ; they are very kind and mannerly with themselves ; I know that they are well treated, and that they are well treated by the faculty ; if Mr. Sherwood errs he is too sympathetic, and I think that is what led to the late trouble ; they knew that they could take advantage of his sympathy and tried to reach him in that way, either to get home or to get favors ; the faculty is too apt to magnify small ailments and the boys took advantage of it ; the best people in this country all claim that the school is under excellent management, better than ever before, and that it has been improving in the last two years ; I know that these boys and girls are far better clothed and better trained, both morally and religiously, and that they are more polite and mannerly than the other children in the town and neighborhood ; I can not suggest any way to improve this school ; I think these boys were playing off to get home or get other favors.

PHILIP WEAVER :

I live in McAlisterville and have lived here for twenty-five years or more ; I am the superintendent of the Lutheran Sunday school ; I live within two hundred yards of the school ; I think the present management exceeds anything we have had heretofore ; the children are better clothed ; they are very clean and neat ; they have excellent manners and are very polite, much more than ever before, and they do not loaf around the shops or stores ; they run but little over

the country ; do not disturb the farmers' fruits, berries or garden, and never tramp through their fields ; they are not half as much of a nuisance as the other boys of the neighborhood ; I mix up with them a great deal ; I see them every day ; am often with them at Sunday school ; there are twenty-five of the boys in the Sunday school ; they behave very well at the Sunday school, and are better informed than the other children ; their general conduct and behavior is far better than the other boys of the town and neighborhood ; the children show no signs of want of food or anything, so far as I have observed ; they looked to be well fed and hearty ; they are fat and plump ; the general health of the children is better than that of a like number in the neighborhood ; their general make-up, clothing, fat appearance, neatness, manners, conduct and education altogether is much better than that of the other children in the neighborhood ; so far as I know they have been well and kindly treated—better than before Mr. Wright came ; I am near their play-grounds and find the boys exceptionally good in their conduct and language ; they have formed a league among themselves, managed by themselves, against swearing and using bad language, and using tobacco, and I think they have broken up these bad habits ; the scholars are well taught, and their religious interests are well looked after as well as it is possible ; Mr. Sherwood is a perfect gentleman, and does his work as well as he can possibly do it ; a large number of the girls come to my Sunday school, too ; I know of a large number of boys and girls attending the Presbyterian Sunday school, and they have also their own Sunday school at the school ; I used to teach there, too ; I did last year, and do so still whenever I can ; I mean I taught at the Sunday school ; as far as my observation goes, I cannot find a single fault with anything about the school ; I cannot suggest anything to help it ; the faculty has been doing everything possible for the school and children ; Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood are especially good, and so is Miss McKillip, the matron, and Mr. Wydell, the male attendant ; Miss McKillip and Mr. Wydell have left and gone to Chester Springs, and the present matron is Miss Williams ; the general sentiment of the people is favorable to the school ; there may be a few who complain a little ; the newspapers do this school great injury ; there is no foundation for these stories.

R. W. AMMERMAN :

I live in McAlisterville very close to the soldiers' orphan school ; I am a shoemaker and do the mending for this school ; I have had two children in this school ; both are discharged ; I have been living here about nine years ; I am not there often at the school but the children come to me at my shop very frequently on errands ; I see the children very frequently ; they are better clothed now than ever before Mr. Wright took hold of them ; they look as if they had been well fed and cared for ; I never heard any complaints from the chil-

dren, and never heard of any complaints made by them, and I never saw anything to lead me to believe they are not well fed; my children fared well—much better under Mr. Wright's management than before; they speak very highly of the school; the children are neat and trim; they are well dressed and comfortable; they are better than I ever knew them before; they are very polite and good mannered; their conduct and behavior is extraordinarily good; when you approach them they will all salute you with a military salute, and speak kind and pleasant words when they come to my shop; they are pleasant and polite, and are very intelligent, bright boys and girls; they are far superior to our own town children; I never heard an oath from one of the boys; I never saw any quarreling; since Mr. Wright came to the school they seldom go to town or anywhere from the school unless on an errand to town on some small business matter; I have no reason to believe that they are not well fed, and they look much better than our children in town; my children never complained about not having enough to eat and neither did any of the children from the school; they look better and are better clothed than the ordinary children in the country; the people generally speak well of the school.

I was in the One Hundred and Forty-eighth regiment—Governor Beaver's regiment—during the war; I am a wounded soldier, and if anything were wrong I would very freely report it.

GEORGE W. McALISTER:

I live within a mile and a half of the school; I think the school is going along well; I believe they have plenty to eat; the clothing is remarkably good; much better than before Mr. Wright came here; the boys wear good, neat, substantial, well fitting and comfortable clothing; much better than our farmer boys wear; they are remarkably polite and manly, and I do say well behaved; the manners of the town children are not near as good as these children; I have never known them to misbehave or to speak ill of any person; they attend church very regularly and behave remarkably well; the people are always pleased to see them; some eight or nine of them have joined our church and some have joined the Lutheran church; I see nothing like mismanagement in this institution; I see no ill treatment; they have been very healthy and I think are happy and contented; their appearance as to health compares very favorably with the other children; I think there is less sickness in the school than in the same number outside of the school; the general opinion of the people here is that the children are very well taken care of and that the school is well managed; I think the school is much superior to what it was before Mr. Wright came there; much better clothed and equipped; I think this is the general opinion of the people; I don't see how it could be otherwise; when Mr. Wright got it it was in a very loose

state; it is all right now; I see no ground for these newspaper charges; I think the accusations are false.

L. W. SEIBER.

I live at McAlisterville; have been here for fifteen years; live near the soldiers' orphan institution, fifty yards away; the school has improved very much under Mr. Wright's management; the clothing and discipline is very much better and the children are all very much better; they used to go out and run over the country before Wright came there; they don't do that now; when they come to town they come on business or on an errand; they come like business men and return when they are done; they never loaf or hang around the shops or stores or on the streets; they are very polite and mannerly and I think they have good habits; since Wright is here I never heard one swear or use bad language; I am out with them considerable and they appear to be very kind with each other; I have never seen a quarrel among them; when they meet a man on the street or anywhere they will give him a military salute, from the largest to the smallest; they do not disturb the farmers and I hear no complaints from anyone; their good behavior is marked in the neighborhood; I have often seen them eating; they are certainly well fed; they are all fat and hearty; I furnish beef to the school; I furnish good beef, no neck, no flank, no shank, no hock; I furnish the best part of the beef; I now furnish sixty pounds per day; last summer I furnished seventy pounds. They killed twelve hogs that weighed in all about 3,300 pounds; I never heard a child complain of not having enough to eat; they look as if they had plenty to eat; they looked fatter and heartier than our town children; they have a fresh appearance; they are cleanly; I am with them so much that I know they have enough to eat; I never heard the first child complain and never heard of a complaint from one of the children; if you compare these orphan boys with our town and country boys, the orphan boys are far superior in appearance, manners and general make-up, and their clothing is far better than the other children; Mr. Sharon, the merchant and hotel keeper, told me to-day that these children are better clothed than his own children; I belong to the Lutheran church and there are about twenty-five boys and twelve to fifteen girls come from the school; they are better dressed than the other children in the Sunday school and are better behaved and much smarter; they are all fine looking, pleasant children, and are happy and contented; they could not be so happy and contented if they were not fed and kindly treated; *I don't believe a word about the story of their starvation; it is as big a falsehood as was ever put on the country.*

The boys all have neckties and collars, and are very neatly dressed. Their clothes fit neatly and are very clean; the girls are much nicer

and finer and better dressed than the other girls in the country and town ; they are a splendid looking lot of children, intelligent and bright, and the people generally in this neighborhood have held the same opinion that I do ; the management of the school is in high repute here ; I was male attendant at this school for four years under Judge Smith ; the school is better now than then in every respect ; the beds and the bedding are splendid and very clean and better than the average hotel bed and I believe much better than the ordinary child of citizens in this vicinity ; the buildings are very clean and well kept ; I always found them this way ; the children are all treated very kindly ; I cannot see how any improvement can be made upon the management of this school ; they might have more pastry and sweet-meats, but I don't believe that would be to the benefit of the children.

MISS NORA CLOSE :

I am the young lady that the correspondent of the Philadelphia Press said was compelled to leave the school on account of not having food sufficient ; this statement is not true ; I never made any such statement to the Press ; the correspondent did not report my statement as I gave it. I was a teacher in this school for two months ; I quit on account of ill health ; the work was too hard for me and my health was broken down when I came ; my people did not want me to come, but I like to teach and came ; I consider the management of the McAlisterville school first class ; I think Mr. Wright is an excellent manager ; I know that he lays in abundant supplies of provisions and food of the very best kind and quality ; I emphatically deny that newspaper statement—it is not true.

Mrs. A. L. McALISTER :

I live in McAlisterville ; am the widow of Dr. McAlister and I have lived here for a long time near the school ; I think the children are very well treated ; their clothing is splendid and of a good quality, neatly fitting and tasty ; they all look to be well fed and cared for ; are polite, intelligent and mannerly ; they often come to get water from my pump ; they think my water is better for drinking ; they always tip their caps and speak pleasantly, and never disturb anything about the yard or garden ; I have never seen nicer or better children in my life ; I often go to the school and I find everything purely clean and in excellent order ; they have an abundant supply of the best qualities of groceries and provisions ; I know that abundance of eatables are provided and given to the children ; I know that the children get plenty to eat ; I never heard one complaint from any of these children ; I never heard that they complained to anyone ; they are happy and contented ; they could not be so happy and contented and pleasant as they are if they did not receive sufficient food ; they look much better than the other children in the town and neighborhood ; they have most excellent clothing ; the children are taught manners and

politeness, and educated to be ladies and gentlemen as well as to be scholars; I don't see how they can make any improvement on this school; I often go over to the school, and in the fall and spring when I go without gloves or mittens or in my bare head the girls will return with me home, and they always have on neat comfortable hoods, mittens or gloves; they are little ladies; I think Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood are excellent managers and they are doing everything in their power for the children; the school has been under splendid government; *I am indignant at the newspaper reports about this starvation; I say their statements are untrue.*

Mrs. ELIZA COX :

I live in Mifflintown, about nine miles from here; I have two children in this school; Willie, aged about thirteen, and Lottie about fifteen; I have been here very often for the last four years; my children have been here four years; I always found everything in perfect order; they could not be better clothed; their beds are good, clean and in very good order. The sleeping rooms are perfectly clean and comfortable; the children are well cared for when well or sick; I always found the children with clean hands, faces and clothing, and their shoes nicely blackened; they are nice and neat. The matron always looked after the girls carefully and the male attendant looked after the boys; I never knew of any unkind treatment; I don't know of any of the children having been in any way neglected; I am satisfied with the way that my children have been treated and I have no fault to find; all that I have ever seen have had plenty to eat, and in sickness they are well cared for; I was here at one time nearly three weeks; they are very nice, polite and mannerly children; I come four or five times a year and sometimes oftener; my children are always satisfied; they never make any complaint to me; I never heard them complaining to any one; they like the school very much; I never heard the children of the school complaining about their food or provisions, but have heard many of them say that they had plenty to eat, and that the provision was good. My boy was one of the supposed insane; he says that they were playing off; that he doesn't know why he did it, but he knew all the time what was going on and what was being done; they always have plenty of provisions and supplies of the very best quality, if properly cooked; they now have a perfect cook, though some time ago they did not have a good cook. I would like to be able to write the real facts of this school and publish them to the people; I think it is a great outrage on Mr. Wright and the management that these falsehoods should be circulated about him and believed by the people and I want to let the people know the truth and how well these children are treated here; I don't know what I would have done had it not been for this school; I wouldn't want

to send my children to a better school or have them better treated than here.

WM. SPITLER :

I live in McAlisterville; my son Gus was at the school; he was one of the supposed insane; he was among the first; he had had nightmare; I had heard a doctor say that when a boy gets such spells that the way to do was to spank him and set him on ice. This was Dr. Fisher that told me this; when we heard that Gus had this spell we went to see him; we wanted to bring him home but he wouldn't come; he came home soon after; he told us he was shamming and that he was afraid to come home for fear that we would spank him and put him on ice. When Mr. Sherwood spoke of separating the boys. Gus says the boys thought that they would get a visit home, so the others commenced to play off too; they did this to get home; we sent our boy back; I don't think they got meat enough; the people generally about McAlisterville are very favorable to the school; I would like to see the children get more meat; my children like the school very well; they are clean and well clothed; they are well taught. I have no complaint only that I think the children have not a sufficient quantity of meat; I think the school was never better than now; I think the children are not abused or treated badly. Since Smiley left three years ago I know of no other teacher being severe; I think the male attendant was a little severe; that is the male attendant some years ago; the present male attendant is very good, and the one who was here before him, Mr. Wydell; my children always spoke highly of Mr. Geo. W. Wright and like him; I had three children in the school; two are now out; I have no complaints of the provisions and supplies, except my idea that they have not meat enough; the clothing is good and I think they have a good corps of teachers; I think the education and the moral and religious training is good; the children are very polite and have good manners and are kind to each other; I know of but one quarrel in six years and I am within sight of the school house; I hear no profanity or bad talk; they salute all strangers manly and soldierly; they do no loafing around the stores and shops or on the streets; they do not annoy the neighbors or citizens; they are 100 per cent. better now than they were before Mr. Wright came; before Mr. Wright came the boys were troublesome; the children of the school are superior to the children of the town school in education and general make-up; I mean their clothing, cleanliness, appearance, conduct, and behavior, general intelligence, moral training and education; these children look much better than the other children at church and Sunday school; they are better trained and learn better; the teachers like to teach them better; when I came here the people were anxious to get rid of the school; now they will petition for it; this was six years ago; then

there wasn't a farmer around here that didn't want to get rid of the school; I don't know one now who doesn't want to get it; I will carry a petition around myself to get the school if necessary.

THOS. K. BEAVER:

I live near McAlisterville; I see the children occasionally; their appearance is very healthy; they show no signs of want of food; they are better clothed than two-thirds of our children in the neighborhood about town; they are properly taught and are polite and good mannered; they have come out to ask me for apples and walked across several fields to find me and ask me; they asked me very nicely; they walked right past the orchard and came to me; I refused them and they went away pleasantly; they have improved very much in the last few years; they never touch anything without permission; when I have refused them they act nicely, and turn around and go home; I see them at church and Sunday school; I have a class of about twenty-five boys at Sunday school; they are well dressed; they are neat in their appearance; they come into church orderly and behave well; they recite very well; some of them have quite a good knowledge of the Scriptures; it is an interesting class, and I would as soon teach that class as any class in Sunday-school; I have been past the school and their play-ground; they are very polite, always salute passers-by with a military salute; I never heard any vile talk or swearing; they go out for nuts in the nut time when they have permission; they never disturb any private property. Some years ago they were a little troublesome; I find them much better under Wright's administration; the last year or two they have been very good; so far as I can see it has been well managed for three or four years back; I never heard any complaint from the children about not getting enough to eat; I heard some outside parties say they thought they didn't get enough meat; they look hearty; they had typhoid fever here last fall, otherwise they are more healthy than the other children in the neighborhood; their clothing compares very favorable to outside people; the people generally believe the school to be well managed and the children well fed and cared for.

REV. EMIL LEWEY:

I have been living at McAlisterville for the last six months; have charge of the Presbyterian church here; live about one block from the soldiers' orphan school, and visit it quite often; my impression of the school is favorable; I believe a better faculty could not be procured; Mr. Sherwood, the principal, and the teachers are more than amply qualified for their positions; besides from their mental ability for their work they have a deep interest in the spiritual affairs of the children; they have daily prayers, Sabbath school, and the children are well instructed in biblical information and moral teaching; since I have been pastor of the church six of the girls have be-

come members of my church; the children are exceedingly well cared for in clothing, food and treatment; I have taken several meals here myself and found them good meals; found the children well supplied with good food; of late I heard some little complaint about the bread not been very good; this I suppose came from inability to procure a good baker at the time; there seems to be a great self-sacrifice on the part of the faculty in the interest of the children, both intellectually, spiritually and physically; the children are well behaving and well trained in manners and politeness; they come in great numbers to my church and always conduct themselves properly; I have mixed with them and I never heard any of them use bad or profane language; all appeared gentle one towards another; never saw any fighting or quarrel or even cross words; they all looked to be well fed, healthy and pretty; they compare more than favorably with the other children in the neighborhood both in outward appearance and behavior; I am struck with their neatness, cleanness and politeness; I never saw nicer children anywhere in any public institution; they are not permitted to rove around the neighborhood; when a stranger comes they always treat him politely; the best people here entertain very favorable impression of the management of the school, and especially of Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood; if the newspaper reporters had not craved such sensationalism, the excitement would not have arrived at this stage; I think the investigation committee should come upon the ground and hear the facts; I know the children are exceedingly well cared for, and cannot make a single suggestion which would add to their comfort or welfare.

JOHN MUSSER :

I live three-quarters of a mile from McAlisterville Soldier' Orphan School; my father's farm adjoins the land belonging to the school and the play grounds; I have lived on my father's farm until recently and have very frequently met the children at school; since Mr. Wright has had charge of it I find the boys very much better than they were previously; under his charge they have shown excellent manners; always polite and pleasant; they have been very careful to give us no trouble or annoyance; if by accident a ball goes into our fields they will not enter to get it without first asking leave from us; this last summer when we were mowing we found more than a dozen of their balls under the grass; they stood along the fence watching us mow, and one would say "There is my ball," and another "There is mine," but did not offer to come into the field without our permission; they never disturbed our fruit or berries without our leave; they seldom ever asked for anything; they are well dressed and hearty; we have often asked them if they had enough to eat and they always answer that they have; since Mr. Wright took charge we have not heard a single complaint from the children; this last fall we sold milk to the

school and some five or six boys came after it—that is, they alternated and came at different times; we often asked them if they got enough to eat, they always replied that they did; they never asked for anything to eat and always looked as if well fed; I never heard them make a noise or fuss; we always thought them well behaved; they came to church much better clothed than the majority of the other children in the neighborhood; the girls are very nicely dressed, better than the most of the girls in the country or town here; this was not so before Mr. Wright came; they were not well clothed then and we often heard complaints that they hadn't enough to eat and asked us to give them something to eat; they would take our fruit and berries without leave before, and we could keep nothing; they would come and fill their pockets and even cut holes in the lining of their coats and fill up their coats with apples and peaches; since Wright came they never bother us; we can get our fruit now, and we sell fruit; we sell fruit to the school and I often ask them if they need any more and they always say they have plenty; they are certainly well provided with everything and show no signs of want, bad treatment or neglect; before Wright was manager the boys threw stones, sticks, tin cans and such things in our fields and kept them in such a condition that we could scarcely mow our grain; then the boys were running wild in the neighborhood; now it is very different; there is a great improvement in the school since Wright got it; the people generally say so; the children are better fed, clothed and cared for; I have no complaints; I hear no complaints outside of the newspapers; we scarcely ever hear of a child being punished now; before Wright came we could often hear them scream from whipping.

W. W. SHARON :

I live at McAlisterville, close to the school; I have lived there since school commenced; I see the children every day; I see them when they come into town on business and on errands; they are polite, and have good manners, and act like little gentlemen; they are quiet and behave in an excellent way; since Mr. Wright came I haven't heard a boy swear, or use bad language; they seem to be kind and gentle; I see no quarreling; they are well clothed—better than the generality of the children in the neighborhood and town; I saw the beds and dormitories a year ago, and believe them to be very good; I think the children well cared for, and well fed; they show every sign of it; I haven't heard a complaint about food from the children since Wright came here; before that I had the post office; they used to come and complain about not having enough to eat; when they come to town they attend to their business and return to school quietly and nicely; I think Mr. Sherwood an excellent principal; I don't see how they can improve their school.

Judge JACOB SMITH :

I live in McAlisterville, close to the school ; I was associate judge for five years in Juniata county ; I have a good knowledge of how the school is being run ; I used to run the school myself ; the children now show more respect and manners than they ever did before ; they are well clothed, neat and clean ; I never saw the school better than now ; the children appear to be very healthy ; never saw them better ; they have plenty of good clothes and good bedding, and they appear to be excellently fed ; I don't know about the table ; they appear all right ; the children never run around the town and neighborhood so little as they do now ; for the last three or four years I never knew them to take anything without leave ; when they are sent after anything they come politely and ask like gentlemen ; I didn't see the children in their late trouble ; was not here ; I believe, and said, it was shamming ; the boys are smart and keen, and can play tricks and put on ; I know them ; I think this legislative committee should come here and examine for themselves ; for the last two or three years I haven't heard a single complaint against the school in this neighborhood ; I haven't heard a child complain ; I heard a couple of drunkards near town complain that the provision wasn't high enough, and that they thought the children didn't get meat enough ; this is all the complaint.

STEPHEN WOODS :

I live in New Florence, Westmoreland county ; my wife has a brother, Harry Henderson, at the McAlisterville Soldiers' Orphan School ; he has been here over two years ; my wife and I came on here March first ; we heard of the children being in such a terrible condition that we thought it our duty to go and see Harry. When we came here we were astonished to find things as good as they are ; we find it a grand home ; we find the children clean, neat, well-dressed, in good order ; heavy clothes ; healthy and polite ; they all had good shoes on ; I didn't see a hole in one of the shoes ; the shoes were well blackened ; saw no shoes without shoe strings ; saw a pile of cast off shoes which were much better than the ordinary children have in our town at home ; their clothes are neat and well brushed ; I didn't see a boy with a button off ; I never saw such nice girls ; our own school can't turn out such a nice lot of girls ; the girls each have seven dresses and a new one being made ; they are good dresses ; we feel perfectly sure that they get plenty to eat, and that the provisions are good and clean ; we examined their fruits and groceries and found them excellent, much better than we can get at home in our country stores ; they have splendid butter ; table cloths, knives, forks, dishes and everything on the table is perfectly clean ; I wouldn't want to sit down to a cleaner or better table ; the average children at home are not half so well cared for ; when Harry comes

home he teaches our children good manners; he tells them how to do and how to act, and if they come to the table with any dirt on them he takes them away and washes them, and when they speak improperly he corrects them; he is a much better boy than he was when he came here; we examined the children carefully and didn't find a child that looked to be ill-treated or badly fed or neglected; we didn't hear a complaint from a single child; at least four dozen of them told us that they had plenty to eat and that they are well-treated. They have No. 1 beds; I never saw cleaner floors, steps, cupboards, porches and so forth; they have an excellent cellar; they have abundant supplies of all kinds of the best provisions; I never saw Mr. Wright; we came to find out for ourselves and are agreeably surprised to find things in such an excellent condition; no attempt to hide anything from us; the children are happy and contented; they look much better and are much better in conduct than our Sunday school at home; I was out with the boys and didn't hear a profane or bad word; not even a cross word; I saw no signs of tobacco.

Mrs. SARAH WOODS :

I live in New Florence, Westmoreland county, Pa.; I am the wife of Stephen Woods; I have a brother at McAlisterville Soldiers' Orphan School; he has been here over two years; his name is Harry Henderson; we heard the newspaper stories about this school and came on to see for ourselves; we got here March 1; we were astonished to find things as good as they are; we found it a good home; we find the children clean, neat, well dressed and in good order; heavy clothing, healthy and polite; they have good shoes on; I didn't see a hole in one of the shoes; the shoes are well blackened; saw no shoes without strings; saw a pile of cast-off shoes which were much better than the ordinary children at home have; their clothes are neat and clean and well brushed; I didn't see a boy with a button off; I never saw such nice girls; our own schools cannot turn out such a nice lot of girls; the girls each have seven dresses and a new one being made; they are good dresses; I feel perfectly sure that they get enough to eat and that the provisions are good and clean; I examined their fruits and groceries and found them excellent, much better than we can get at home in our common country store; they have splendid butter; table cloths, good knives and forks, dishes, and everything on the table is perfectly clean; I wouldn't want to sit down to a cleaner or better table; the average children at home are not near so well cared for; when Harry comes home he teaches our children how to act, and if they come to the table dirty he takes them away and washes them; when they speak improperly he corrects them; he is a much better boy than when he came here; I examined the children carefully and didn't find a child that looked to be ill-treated

or badly fed or neglected; I didn't hear a complaint from a single child; at least four dozen of them told us that they had plenty to eat and are well treated; they have No. 1 beds; I never saw cleaner floors, steps, cupboards, porches, or a house generally; they have an excellent cellar; they have abundant supplies of all kinds of provisions; I never saw Mr. Wright; we came to find out for ourselves and are very agreeably surprised to find things in such excellent condition; no attempt to hide anything from us; the children are happy and contented; they look much better and are much better in their conduct than our children in our Sunday school at home.

Mrs. MARY SHARON:

I live in McAlisterville; I am the wife of W. W. Sharon; I have lived here ever since this school was organized; I used to be in the school before Mr. Wright came; we live near the school and I am often in the school now; I often eat at the school; my husband has a store and a hotel; we always find the dining room and kitchen, back room, cloths and dishes and everything very clean; the provisions are all the children ought to have or need, and since Mr. Wright had the school it has been much better; I know this because I was employed here before Mr. Wright came; I had charge of the sewing-room while Colonel McFarland was here; the school is very much better now in every way; I think the present management is very good; the children's clothing never was better than now; every child is now well dressed with good clothing, shoes and so forth; I am sure the children are now much better clad than the other children in the neighborhood; they appear to be well fed; they are fat and hearty; since Mr. Sherwood has had charge they have had better manners and are more polite than ever before; they conduct themselves well at school and at church; since Sherwood came we have never heard a boy swear; and never saw a quarrel; they are kind and gentle with one another; they are more affectionate than ordinary brothers and sisters; they never loaf around town or disturb any one; I never heard a child complain about not having enough to eat since Wright came; I think they are well and kindly treated; I don't think there was much the matter with the children when they were supposed to be insane.

MISS GERTY WILLIAMS:

I am the matron at the soldiers' orphans school at McAlisterville; I have been here some time—some two or three months; I have been in among schools since for the last twenty one years; I was matron at Chester Springs; I was at the Harford school; at the Quaker or Friends school at West Chester; I never saw a man better qualified or more willing to provide for a school than Mr. Wright; I consider him excellent in all the positions; he buys well; he is very prompt to supply; he never does anything in a stinty way; it is not in him to

cheat those children; he likes to provide well; he gets plenty of the very best clothing, and he is careful to see that it is neat and nice; I consider the management much better than at the Friends school; I think McAlisterville a good school; it is well equipped; the children are hearty, bright, happy and contented; I am sure I never saw a better managed school.

MISS ADA IRVINE :

I have been employed in the soldiers' orphan school for three years, and am the dining-room woman here; for breakfast we have one warm dish, besides coffee, bread and butter, and molasses or syrup; we sometimes have more than this; we never have less; for dinner we have not less than meat, soup and vegetables, and bread; and for supper we never have less than bread and butter, tea or coffee, and some kind of fruit, and very often more; we cook all the meat they eat; we have been getting seventy pounds a day until lately; I thought we did not need so much, and I told the butcher to send us sixty; I cook all the meat they will eat for dinner and even more; what they don't eat for dinner I cut down for supper; we have a pie once a week—little things like that occasionally; we use a great deal of mackerel; there is no limit of quantity of anything; the cook and I do the management and arrangement as to what we shall eat and cook; the children never bother us nor ask us for pieces; not one since I have been here has asked me for a piece; I have been here since the 6th of October last; I haven't heard a child complain about not getting enough to eat; I am sure they get all they want; there is no special time for bad bread; it was only occasionally when we had bad bread; they have milk in their coffee; we have three fresh cows and this gives us all the milk we need; we never limit the supply of tea or coffee unless we think the children are drinking too much for their health; I never saw any disposition on the part of Mr. Wright to stint provisions, he never objected or said to me we were cooking too much; he has often cautioned us and told us to cook plenty; sometimes told us to cook more varieties; we give the children fish, hams, dried beef, cheese, lobsters, canned salmon, canned chicken.

J. M. SHERWOOD :

I have been principal during the past four and a half years; I have direct charge of the educational department and the clerical work during the absence of Mr. Wright, manager; I have had the oversight of the school with authority to provide for any emergency that might arise; I had authority to order and purchase goods of all kinds when needed; I have repeatedly ordered and my orders have always been recognized; I have no pecuniary interest in the school beyond that of my salary and never had; economizing or stinting the school would in no way work to my advantage; my entire and only interest is to

make the school the best possible in all its departments; the reporter of the *Press* when here found no fault with our school.

GERTY SPITLER :

I have been here nine years and about four months. I was discharged at sixteen years of age, on the 23d of December, 1887; my parents live at McAlisterville; I haven't been here much for four months; I have been at Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania; I was here before Mr. Wright came, with Judge Smith; the management is much better under Mr. Wright; the clothing was better, the provisions were better, and the teaching was better; we always got enough to eat; I liked all of my meals better than breakfast; we had nothing hot but coffee for breakfast when I was there; dinner was good; I had a good comfortable bed, not crowded; Mr. Wright always gave us good clothing; Mr. Wright's teachers were very good, better than under McFarland; I got what meat I wanted and more; coffee for breakfast and tea for supper; I always thought we got enough of vegetables; our clothing was good under Wright's management; Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood were always very good and kind to me, so was Miss McKillip, the matron; I liked her very much; I think she is the best matron ever we had; she cannot be excelled; she always kept everything very clean; she was fair and impartial; she took great pains teaching us how to put up our hair and how to put on our clothes, in order to look neat and well dressed under her management; they are generally happy and contented; they all like her; she gave us moral and religious teaching and was very kind to us.

AUGUSTUS SPITLER :

I am fourteen years of age; I have been in this school eight years; I like the school real well; better than I ever did; it seems to me it is much better under Mr. Wright than it was before Mr. Wright came; we get enough to eat and it is good; I never made any complaints about our eating and never heard any complaints from the boys; I never knew any child that didn't get enough to eat; I didn't hear the boys complain; I never heard but one boy say that he didn't get enough to eat, but I knew he did get enough to eat; our beds are good and clean; our clothing is first rate; they all treat us kindly here; I like all the teachers; I am never abused or whipped.

I am one of the boys that played off crazy; I am the second case; the first was Michael Briney; he played crazy; when we went to bed I started to cut up and make fun; then Harvey Miller came in and said that I was crazy; then I did start to play crazy; I would roll up the covers and throw myself up against the corner, against the wall and against the door, and then I would fall down again; then Joe Hamer went out for Mr. Coovert, the male attendant; Mr. Sherwood came up and said "Ho, Gus! Ho, Gus!" and he would shake me and then he would halloo "Ho, Gus!" but I let on I knew nothing; then the

excitement got up and they sent for the doctor, Dr. Hoopes; he told the boys to bring up a basin of cold water and a rag; then they rubbed me and then they kept on rubbing me and putting on cold water with this wet rag until I shivered with cold; then George McGraner came; he was holding me in bed, and then when the doctor came I thought it wouldn't do to admit playing off, so I thought that I was in for it and I would carry it out; when I would get still George McGraner would kind of hunch me up in the stomach with his knee and that would start me off again; I kept on until late in the night; I went home the next day; when I went in mother said she believed that I was playing off; I didn't say anything—I was afraid of giving myself away—father said he knew I was playing off; I had a large book with pictures and he would ask me what the pictures were and I wouldn't tell him correctly; I would tell him something else; they thought there was nothing wrong with me and sent me back to school; when I was at home father said Dr. Fisher's cure was to whip and set on ice; he said he would try that the next time; about a week after I went back I played it again; I started it in the morning; I run around the play ground; Pete McCoy said "You had better go and catch him, maybe he's crazy;" I didn't go to breakfast that morning; I kept playing on; they brought me to the sick room and I was there until after dinner, and then I quit because I got tired playing off; the time when Charlie Brett played I started it again; we cut up awful; called "cats" letting on my cat was gone; George Gineer handed me an old stocking, and I let on that that was a cat; in the morning father came over—at dinner time and took me home; three boys took me over; when my father wanted me to go home I was afraid to for fear he would apply Dr. Fisher's cure; I just played it three times; no one put me up to it; I was playing off every time; I knew everything that was going on; I was only letting on; when Sherwood came the first time I was laying on my face, and laying very still; I let on that I was stupid and then I let on that I didn't know anything; I had no notion of playing off until Harvey Miller said I was crazy but I thought all the time that Michael Briney was playing off; there wasn't a thing wrong with me; we get fish and ham, beef, tomatoes, cheese, potatoes, cabbage, turnips, beans, canned corn, barley, oat meal, sauerkraut, apricots, dried apples, green apples, rice, currants, raisins, fried potatoes, fried mush, dumplings, pot-pie, cake, pie, crackers, biscuit, molassess; we get plenty to eat; I heard my father say that he was glad I was here; that I was well treated.

HARRY WILLIAMS :

I am sixteen years old in May; I have been here nine years; I like it first rate here; I like the school and the teachers; I am one of the boys that played off; I did so because I saw the other boys, and I thought I would have some fun and a good time too; I played twice;

no one asked me to play it ; there was nothing at all wrong with me when I was playing ; the boys were all playing off ; I thought the other boys were playing off ; Gus Spitler didn't tell me that he was playing off ; I saw Gus playing off and then he would turn his head and laugh ; that is why I thought he was playing off ; I remember when my mother came to see me and all that was said and done while she was here ; I could have kept from playing it if I wanted ; there was no reason for it only my own desire ; my clothing is good ; I have three suits and an extra pair of pants ; shoes and stocking are good ; two good new woolen shirts and two good old woolen shirts ; they are all good ; we get treated well and plenty to eat ; if not it is our own fault.

ADAM GROVE :

I am fifteen years old ; I have been here three years ; I played off crazy ; I did it twice ; I did it because the rest did it ; I knew what was going on all the time ; no one told me to do it ; no one asked me to do so ; my clothing is like the other boys ; I have three suits and an extra pair of pants ; four woolen shirts, three pairs of stockings and a good pair of shoes ; my every day suit is very good—Sunday suit of course is better ; we get plenty to eat and good provisions ; we see no one stinted ; I like it here ; I like the faculty and the teachers ; we are treated well ; we have comfortable beds and plenty of covering ; we get plenty of sleep at night.

CHARLIE BRETT :

I am fourteen years old ; I have been here two years ; my home is in Pine Grove ; I played off crazy twice ; I did it for fun ; I knew what was going on all the time ; I mind everything that was said and done when I was playing : I would say “ molasses ” ; we had lobster soup ; there was nothing ailed me at the time, there was nothing ailed me at any time ; the second time I had a little headache ; I confessed of my own free will and accord ; we get plenty to eat—good clothing ; I have the same clothing as the other boys, three suits ; they treat us well and I like to stay here ; I met you (Mr. Greer) in the road when you came ; I mind Mrs. Cox was there.

JOS. HAMER :

I am thirteen years old ; been here seven years next September ; I like it first rate ; I am one of the boys that played crazy ; I did it twice ; there was nothing wrong with me ; I knew everything that was going on when I was playing ; I saw the rest of the boys playing off ; I saw them shamming ; they were allowed to go skating and sliding and I thought I would have some fun, so I played crazy. I wasn't crazy—there was nothing wrong with me ; no one asked me to ; I confessed of my own free will. When Mr. Wright called us out, he said for all that had nothing the matter, or that were playing off, to hold up their right hand ; we all held up our right hands except five

or six; I raised my right hand; I did it because I was playing off; then Mr. Wright said for those who had raised our hands to take our seats; he didn't threaten to whip us or punish us; we did it freely; we get enough to eat and it is good; my clothing is like the other boys; I have three suits of clothes and three shirts—four shirts, and three pairs of stockings; dressed like the other boys.

HENRY LIMES :

I am fifteen years old; I have been here about three or four years; I am one of the boys that played off crazy; I did so three times; I wasn't crazy; there wasn't anything wrong with me; I did it because the others were playing off; I knew all the time what was going on; I knew what everybody said about me; I was well; I am well now and have been in good health all the while; I get plenty to eat; the eating had nothing to do with my playing off; the boys all get plenty to eat; we all have good clothes; three suits—two good ones and a work suit; I confessed of my own free will; I like the school very much here; they are kind and treat me well.

HARVEY MILLER :

I am fifteen years old; I have been here three years; am one of the boys that played off crazy; I played off; I knew what was going on all the time; I mind what they were talking about and doing; some blamed the boys for using drugs, and some blamed me for giving the boys drugs; I didn't give the boys drugs; I first played off to get in and see if they had any drugs; I don't think the boys had any; the next time George McGraner asked me to play off so that we would get into the infirmary. He wanted to take care of me when I was playing off, and then we would both be in the infirmary, then we would play off when people were coming, and we would both get our meals brought up to us; we had no other idea but that; the boys had not been using drugs; I knew what was going on all the time; I knew what the people were doing and saying; I have been in good health; we get plenty of provisions and they are good; we have comfortable beds; they give us kind treatment; I made my confession of my own will; I wasn't forced into it; I have three good suits and an extra pair of pants; we have four good flannel shirts, two old pairs and two new; I have everything that I need.

JOHN BARGO :

I am fifteen years old; I have been five years in this school; I like it good; I like it good here; I get plenty to eat and good provisions; I played off crazy; I only played one day; I did it for fun—as a joke; no one told me to do it; I did it myself; there was nothing at all wrong with me; I didn't need to do it if I didn't want to; I knew everything that was going on; I had perfect control of myself; I had no reason to do this; I didn't do it because I didn't like the school—I did like the school, and I like the teachers, I like Mr. and Mrs.

Sherwood and Mr. Wydell, and I think Mr. Wright good; you can't play off on him; the boys soon quit playing off when he came; when he smacked Tilden Limes and threw him in a snow drift John Scott got well at once; I have the same clothing that the other boys have, three suits—two good ones and a work suit—three flannel shirts, stockings and a good pair of shoes, and plenty of everything that I need; we have good beds and plenty of covering; we have every comfort we need, and if a boy does not get enough to eat it is his own fault.

MICHAEL BRINEY :

I am fifteen years old; I have been here for two years; I like it here first rate; I was the first boy to get sick; I was not crazy and I didn't let on that I was crazy, but I was kind of sick in my stomach; I get plenty to eat and plenty of clothes like the other boys; I am well treated; I have a good bed; I wasn't crazy and didn't get crazy; I often talk in my sleep and sometimes I call out in my sleep—I guess that is why they thought I was crazy, but I wasn't; I like Mr. Wright.

HARRY HENDERSON :

I am fourteen years old; I have been here two years; I like the school first rate; I am one of the boys that played crazy; I did it two times; I didn't have any reason to play crazy; there wasn't anything at all wrong with me; we get plenty to eat and we get plenty of clothing; I have the same clothing as the other boys—three suits—two good suits and a working suit, three flannel shirts, three pairs of stockings and a good pair of shoes; I would rather be here than at home; there was no one told me to play off crazy; I did it myself.

RANDALL SCOTT :

I am fifteen years old next April; I have been here about four years; Mr. Coovert sent Wallace Galbreath and me to the wood pile to pile wood; Wallace said "I'll bet there isn't anything wrong with any of them" and I said "I will bet so too;" Wallace said to me "They have it mighty nice up in Mr. Coovert's room," and I said "I suppose so;" Wallace said "Suppose you and I play off crazy too;" I said "All right;" that evening when I went in to supper I let on that I was worrying about my brother John, and then I commenced to play crazy; I played it twice; Wallace commenced the same evening; Grant Heim came up there; I had read a story entitled Jim Springs; then I called Grant Heim, Jim Springs; I knew what I was doing; I wanted to make Grant Heim and Mr. Coovert believe that I had been reading too much; I read a good deal; I just talked a good bit and then I acted foolish; I turned my head around and laughed; I often put my head under the cover to laugh; I couldn't keep from it; Charlie Shuey, a little fellow was playing crazy in another bed near me; he would say, "Jake Diefenduffer," and I thought that was such a funny name that I would laugh; the next time I played off in the

sick room; then they took me to the attic and I quit playing off; I always knew what I was doing and what the other fellows were doing and what the doctors were doing; I didn't need to do it; I thought it would be good fun and the other boys did it and I wanted to get in the infirmary; I confessed that there wasn't anything ailing me, and I made my confession of my own free will; we get enough to eat; I get clothing like the other boys—three suits, two good ones and a working suit, three flannel shirts, stockings and shoes; everything we need; good bed and plenty of covering; I got tired playing and I quit to take a rest; I did it for fun; I wouldn't have done it had I known it would have made this big trouble; I meant no harm; I believe if Mr. Wright had been there none of us boys would have been playing off; a whole lot of the boys got to playing it and Mr. Wright buried them in the snow and they soon quit; there was no new cases after Mr. Wright came; Mr. Wright got after us; we cannot fool him and we don't want to try it; I am sure the whole set played off; I am telling this because it is true and not to please anybody; I am in the fourth B grade; I like to be here; I get a little lonesome sometimes on Saturday.

WALLACE GALBREATH:

I am about thirteen years old; I came here from Dayton; I have been here since the Dayton school burnt down last year; I would far rather be in this school than at the Dayton school; the eating is about the same; the treatment is very good here, better than at Dayton; the school is better and the clothing is away better than at Dayton; they fit better and are warmer, finer and neater; the boys look better here than they do at Dayton; I heard Randall Scott's story about him and I playing off; I did play off; I played off four days; I had a good time and lots of fun; I intended to play the next day, but Wright came; I thought I had better not try it after that; I think there would have been but little playing off after the first two cases—he would have stopped it; we can't fool Mr. Wright; I like him and all the employés very well; I haven't such clothes as the other boys have because I came from Dayton; they didn't give us as good at Dayton; I knew what I was doing all the time and could have prevented it had I wanted to; I confessed of my own free will; I mind of you (Mr. Greer) being there and being with us at supper; I mind what you said and what was done; there wasn't a thing wrong with me at all; it was good fun for us.

WILLIE COX:

I am twelve years old; I have been here three and a half years; I like it good; they treat us well here; I am one of the boys that played off crazy; I did it twice; I did it to have some fun, and to get skating and sliding; I had no other reason; I knew what was going

on all the time; there was nothing the matter with me; I get plenty to eat; my mother comes often to see me; she is much pleased with the school; I had the fever; there were no boys asked me to play crazy; I played a day and a half; the second time I got tired and quit; I think I would not have played if Mr. Wright had been here; the first time I played about six hours; I didn't play after Mr. Wright came; the other boys quit when he came.

THOS. McDOWELL:

I am ten years going on eleven; I have been here since the Dayton fire; I like it here better than at Dayton; it is a better place; I get plenty to eat and good clothes and good beds, and we have good teachers; I like the people here all well; I played off crazy once; I played off Saturday evening before you (Mr. Greer) came; I kept it up three days, and quit because I got tired; you asked me if I knew you and I didn't say anything; I kicked and struck and knocked around; I knew what was going on all the time; I heard what everybody said; I played off to have fun; I didn't want to after Mr. Wright came; the other boys were shamming, too; nobody asked me to do it.

AL. BAKER:

I am twelve years old; I had the shakes—the real shakes, but so far as being crazy I was playing that off; I played crazy two days; I did it without a reason; no one asked me to do it; we get enough to eat and we are treated well; I have clothes like the other boys; they all treat me well and I like to stay at this school.

GEORGE READER:

I am twelve years old; I have been here five years; I played off crazy twice; I had no reason for doing so; they all treat me well; I knew everything that was going on while I was playing off; there was nothing the matter with me; we get plenty to eat and we get good treatment, and we have good beds and plenty of cover.

WILLIE BURGE:

I am eleven years old; I played off crazy; I played it three times; I knew everything that was going on when I played off; there was nothing wrong at all with me; I had no reason for doing so; I am well treated; I have plenty of food and it is good; we have good beds and plenty of covering; I like it first rate here; I came from Dayton; I like this school far better than Dayton; it is a much better school; I like the teachers; I like it well; we have much better clothing here than at Dayton; my clothing is not as good as the others because I came from Dayton; we have got the same clothing as the other boys since we came here, but our Dayton clothing is not as good as the clothing the other boys had when we came here.

WARNER SNYDER:

I am fourteen; I have been here five years; I like it first rate here;

they are good to us ; they don't treat us badly ; we get enough to eat—lots ; we never leave the table without enough to eat ; Mr. Wright often told us that if the waiters overlooked us to go to Mr. Sherwood and inform him ; sometimes the waiters overlook us ; I knew what was going on all the time : I could have helped myself had I wanted to ; no one forced me to confess, and it was of my own free will.

CHARLIE McCONNELL :

I am ten years old ; I like it here first rate ; I get plenty to eat and good, and I have a good bed ; I played crazy twice ; I have no reason ; my mind was all right ; I didn't feel good at the stomach ; I knew what was going on all the time about me ; I have clothing like the other boys—just the same.

LYNN SHIRK :

I am fourteen years old ; I have been here about four years ; my home was Clearfield ; I have no home now but this school ; I am one of the boys that played off crazy ; I was in the wash house on Tuesday in February ; Charlie Brett said he would bet I would be crazy before night ; so I thought I would play off crazy, and so I did ; I said " grub ; " I all the time said " grub ; " I knew all the time what I was doing and what was doing and what the others were doing ; we did everything we did voluntarily and of our own desire ; I knew I was saying " grub " and wanted to say " grub ; " I did not need to say it ; it is the word I wanted to say ; I could then have behaved as well as now, had I wanted to ; there was nothing wrong with my mind at all, and nothing wrong with my nerves ; I put it all on and I did so willingly ; I just had the one spell ; I had no object ; I just saw the rest and I thought I would do so too ; Wallace Galbreath and all the boys told me they were playing off, except John Brady ; Wallace said they were playing off to have fun ; when we were eating the lobster soup I was saying " grub ; " I knew all the time what was going on ; I am in good health ; I have two good suits and an old suit to work in, and I have an extra pair of pants and an extra coat, nearly as good as this one ; I have two new flannel shirts and two old ones ; I have plenty of everything ; I have two pairs of drawers—the boys all have two pairs of drawers ; we have good pairs of shoes ; we have new shoes ; I am sure that we get enough to eat, and good, and the grub is clean ; I made my first confession of my own free will ; when I was playing off I remember of Mr. Spitler coming and being present when Gus and I were playing off. (Here the boy stated several things that were said and done by himself and Gus Spitler when Mr. Spitler was present, and Mr. Spitler agreed that that was what they said, and that they were very correct in their statement.)

CLOYD McCoy :

I am the boy they call " Pete " McCoy ; " Pete " is not my name ; I am fifteen years of age and have been here four years ; I was one of

the boys that played off crazy; I just played off once; it was in February; I did it because the other boys did it; I knew what was going on all the time; I had no special object in doing it; I have clothing enough—three suits of good clothes; my shoes are good; I have four woolen shirts; I have drawers and woolen socks; we get more to eat than we want; it is good and I have no complaint to make about the provisions here; we have good beds.

JOHN SCOTT:

I am eleven years old; I played off crazy; I mind of you (Mr. Greer) being in the school room; I was saying "rats," and that the cats were biting me; when you asked me who you were I said "a cow;" I mind of you talking to me and trying to keep me still; you told my brother Randall to be kind to me; Randall was holding me; he wasn't hurting me; when you were there I pulled the bolsters away and tried to pull the slats out; they give us plenty to eat and it is good; they are good and kind to us; I like all the people here; they are all good to us; there was nothing at all wrong with me when they thought I was crazy; I have three suits, and a good one in my case besides.

TILDEN LUMES:

I am twelve years old; I have been here three years; this is my fourth year; my home is in Lewistown; I am one of the boys that played off crazy; I had no object in doing it; I wanted to fool them and have some fun; that is why I did it; there was nothing the matter with me at all; I played twice; I mind of you (Mr. Greer) being here; you came on Sunday; I was upstairs in bed; you asked me if I knew you, and I told you that you were "Uncle Sam," when you were there; Tom McDowell commenced to play off, then George Givler was taking care of him; Tom commenced to shake and kick and jump, and then he tried to bite himself, and then he pulled his hair; you asked Tom if he knew you, and he didn't say anything to you; he just looked at you; we had lobsters for supper that night; I called the lobsters running oysters; I said that they had no heads or tails and still they run; at supper all the time Charley Brett said "molasses;" Lynn Shirk said "grub" all the time; I ate off the other boys' plates that meal; there was one on each side of me and one in front of me; Albert Wilson set in front of me; Charlie McConnell set on one side; I wasn't crazy at all; I knew everything that was going on; I have plenty of clothing; I like Mr. Coovert better than Mr. Wydell.

JOHN BRADY:

I like it here first rate; I have been here about four years; my father is dead; I am one of the boys that played crazy; we had a committee of boys who had a bad list, and they put me on the bad list and I was mad about it; the bad list is a list kept by the boys,

and anyone who misbehaves or acts badly his name is put on it, and it is considered a disgrace to be put on this list; I felt vexed that the boys had put me on the bad list; I played off twice; there was nothing crazy about me; I knew everything that was going on at the time; I had no special object in doing it; I didn't write a confession to it when I had done it; I am sorry that I did it; if I had it to do over again I wouldn't do it. Mr. Wright and the faculty treat me first rate; they are kind to me and to all the boys and girls; I like the teachers all first rate; I would rather be here than to go home to live; our provisions are very good—as good as can be expected; I have always had all I wanted; if anyone leaves the table without enough to eat it is his own fault; we all have plenty of good clothes; I have no fault to find with anybody.

HARRY SMITH :

I am about sixteen years of age; I have been well treated here; we have plenty to eat and are well clothed. I like the school and the teachers, and have no fault to find with the management.

JOE LAWSON :

I am fourteen years old; we are all well treated here, have plenty to eat and plenty of clothes; I like the school and the teachers, and have no fault to find.

GRANT HIME :

I am about sixteen years of age; I like this school and the faculty; I am well treated, have an abundance to eat and sufficient clothing; I have no fault to find with the management.

GRANT WARNER :

I am about sixteen years old; I have no fault to find with the management of this school; I am very well clothed, have plenty to eat and like the teachers.

CARL MOORHEAD :

I am fifteen years old; I came here from Dayton; I like this school very much better than the Dayton school; it is a better school; we have better clothes here; I can find no fault with the management or teachers; we are well fed.

WARREN GALBREATH :

I am twelve years old; when the Dayton school burned I came here; this is a much better school than that one; I like the teachers here, and have no fault to find with the management; we are well clothed and fed.

FRANK GABE :

I am fifteen years old; I like this school and the teachers first rate; I have good clothing and enough to eat; I have no fault to find with the management.

GEORGE McGRANER :

I am about fourteen years old ; we are treated very kindly here, have good clothes, lots of them, get plenty to eat, and I like the teachers and management.

ALBERT WILSON :

I am fifteen years old ; I have been well treated here ; we are all well treated ; we have plenty to eat and are well clothed ; we have no fault to find with the teachers or management ; we like them.

HARRY SHIRK :

I am about sixteen years of age ; I have always had plenty to eat at the school, and always was well clothed and kindly treated ; I like the teachers and Mr. Wright, and have no fault to find with him.

LEWIS KINKAID :

I am about sixteen years of age ; have always been treated kindly here, and never suffered for want of sufficient food or clothing ; we have always had plenty of both ; I like the teachers ; cannot find any fault with the management.

CHAS. WOODRING :

I am about sixteen years of age ; I like Mr. Wright and the teachers here ; they have always treated me well and I have no fault to find ; I have always had enough to eat and plenty of clothes.

LIZZIE McDOWELL :

I am fourteen years old ; I have always had sufficient to eat and also to wear since I have been in the school ; the teachers always treated us kindly, and we like them ; I have no fault to find with Mr. Wright.

LETTIE CARTER :

I am sixteen years old ; since Mr. Wright has been manager of the school I have always been treated kindly, well clothed, plenty to eat, and we have had good teachers ; I have no fault to find with the school.

MATTIE SEGRIST :

I am about sixteen years old ; have always been kindly treated, well clothed, and had plenty to eat ; I like the teachers and the management and have no complaint to make.

MARY MARTIN :

I am fifteen years old ; I like the school and everything about it ; the teachers are very kind to us, and I have always had plenty of clothes and enough to eat ; I have no complaint to make against Mr. Wright.

CLARA HIME :

I am nearly sixteen years old ; I have always been very kindly

treated by the faculty and management, and have no fault to find with either; we have nice clothes and plenty to eat.

LAURA DEHUFF :

I am about sixteen; I have always had good clothes and enough of them, and plenty to eat at the school since Mr. Wright came; the teachers are well liked and treat us kindly.

ANNIE AUMAN :

I am fifteen years old; I have clothes like the rest of the girls and they are good ones; I always have had plenty to eat and been very kindly treated by the teachers; I like them and have no fault to find with the management.

FANNIE GIVLER :

I have always been well clothed and fed since I came to this school, and have always been treated kindly by the teachers and like them; I am fifteen years old.

MAY McDOWELL :

I am fifteen years old; I like the faculty and management here and have no fault to find with either; we have been provided with sufficient food and clothing, and are always kindly treated.

ALMA BOWES :

I am fifteen years old; I like the school, the teachers and Mr. Wright; I have always been kindly treated and had lots of clothes and lots to eat.

ANNA HAMER :

I am fourteen years of age; have always been kindly treated here and very well dressed and fed; I like the teachers and management and have no fault to find.

MARIA BEAVER :

I am fourteen years of age; I am satisfied with the school; I like the teachers; they have always treated me kindly; I have always been well fed and dressed, and have no fault to find with the management.

IRENE DREXLER :

I am fifteen years old; always had plenty to eat and to wear; I like the teachers and have always been treated kindly by them; I have no complaint to make.

ANNA WILSON :

I am fifteen years of age; I have always been treated very kindly here; there never was any want of food or dresses; I like the teachers and the management.

DORA MILLER :

I am fourteen years of age ; since Mr. Wright came here I have always had lots of dresses and plenty to eat ; the teachers are good and kind to us and we like them ; I have no fault to find.

MATTIE TIPPERY :

My age is fourteen ; I have never suffered for want of food or clothes here, but have always had plenty of both ; we are always treated very kindly by the faculty and management and like them ; have no fault to find with them.

ADA FISHER :

I am aged fourteen years ; I have always been treated kindly here ; always had sufficient clothing and plenty to eat ; I like the teachers, and have no fault to find with the management.

LIZZIE TAYLOR :

I am about sixteen years of age ; we have always been treated very kindly by the faculty and management, and I have no complaint to make against them ; as to food and clothing, we always had an abundance of both ; we like the teachers.

ETTA TIPPERY :

My age is thirteen ; since I came here I have been very kindly treated ; always had plenty to eat and plenty of clothes ; I like the teachers, and have no fault to find with anything about the school.

ANNIE BOYH :

I am about fifteen years old ; have always been treated kindly here by everybody ; I like the teachers very much, and have no complaint or fault to find with the management ; we always have had sufficient clothes and plenty to eat.

MAGGIE CARNEY :

My age is fourteen ; I go to the school and have been very kindly treated ; always had plenty to eat and good clothes to wear ; the teachers are very kind to us and are well liked ; I don't see anything about the school that is wrong.

LAURA DERR :

I am fifteen years old ; I attend the school ; have no fault to find with our clothes or what we eat ; we have been always kindly treated by the teachers and like them.

OSCAR SHUEY :

I am twelve years of age ; I am one of the boys that played off I did it like the other boys ; I hadn't any reason for doing it ; I knew everything that was going on all the time ; I confessed of my own free will ; I get plenty to eat and good clothes and a good bed.

DAVID HOWELL:

I had chills; I didn't play crazy and wasn't crazy; I had a jerking from chills; plenty to eat; I am like the rest—I have plenty of clothes; I have the same clothing as the other boys; we are all well treated; I hear no complaints.

OAKLAND MILLS, PA., *March 4, 1889.*

JOHN M. GREER, Esq.:

Grade and quality of flour used by the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville.

The flour used by the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville is made of the best wheat the best farms of this section can produce, and is made by the latest and most improved short system roller process, using the latest and most improved machinery.

We make but one grade of flour, and it is used by the majority of the best families of this section of country, and we are competing successfully with such mills as the best roller mills of Harrisburg, Lewistown and Thompsontown, and are putting flour in families that one year ago used nothing but the best any of these mills could produce.

Respectfully,

G. B. ROUSH,
Miller.

For L. & J. B. WILSON,
Oakland Mills, Pa.

MIFFLINTOWN, PA., *March 5, 1889.*

HON. JOHN M. GREER, *Butler, Pa.:*

DEAR SIR: I am a charter member of Post 134, G. A. R., of this town; also, a past commander, and in that capacity and in the capacity of a private citizen, have frequently visited the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville, and I am compelled to say that under the management commonly known as the "syndicate," the school, buildings, pupils, and everything appertaining thereunto, has invariably presented a much better appearance and condition than under the management of any of its predecessors within my knowledge. I believe the universal verdict of all good citizens of unbiased minds in this community, if honestly expressed, would be that this school, under the management of Senator Wright, has been as well, if not better (I must say better) conducted in all its various departments, than under the management of any of his predecessors.

The pupils have not had spring-beds, hair mattresses, hot and cold water in every room, modern bath rooms, buildings heated throughout—scarcely half a dozen families in Juniata county enjoy such comforts. These children have all the comforts of life enjoyed by thousands of well-regulated country homes all over this broad land of ours. And a

majority of the comforts and enjoyments and opportunities they never would have enjoyed had it not been for these institutions, for many of them were taken from homes not the best in the land. I have seen these children, many of them, in their homes, previous to being sent to this school and it was enough to make the heart of any human ache to see their condition. Their's is a paradise now to their condition at home. Many of them had good homes, but I venture the assertion none of them have more comforts at home they enjoy in this school. I was raised on a farm in the country; I think well raised, as I had good christian parents and I never knew what it was to have fire in my sleeping room until I grew to manhood. The coldest mornings in the winter I bathed my face and hands at the pump outside of the house. I slept on a corded bed; a straw tick, with blankets and that unknown article of covering (that is unknown to blue bloods), a "hap" for covering, and plodded through the snow two miles to school.

Hundreds of men occupying high places in our land to-day, did not in their youth have half the comforts and the opportunities these boys enjoy. But public institutions promulgated for bettering the condition of man here below have in all ages had the devil to fight, and we may as well reconcile ourselves to the fact that the battle will rage until the end of time. I am in favor of the soldiers' orphan schools. In favor of their continuance and their improvement.

I know dozens of young men to day who can point with pride to what these schools have done for them. I know young men who, to-day, would have been unable to do the simplest question in arithmetic, had it not been for these schools. They can be kept going. They can be improved. And when there are no more soldier's sons and daughters to educate they could be kept going with profit and glory to this great Commonwealth, in furnishing homes and an education to poor orphan children who otherwise will grow up in crime and ignorance.

Respectfully,

W. H. ROGERS.

MIFFLINTOWN, PA., *March 4, 1889.*

Capt. C. McCLELLAND :

DEAR SIR: In reply to your inquiry as to my opinion of the management of the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville. My judgment is based upon frequent visits to the school as member of Soldiers' Orphan Committee of Post 134, G. A. R., appointed for the purpose of supervising the comfort and welfare of soldiers' orphans in that school. We have several times visited in that capacity, and with one exception without previous notice to any one that we were coming, calling occasionally so near at mealtime that they had not time to make

extra preparations for display, yet I have always found abundance of well-prepared substantial food.

We have also invariably examined all the apartments of the buildings, sleeping and cooking apartments, etc., and feel justified in saying that they are in as good condition as can be expected in such an institution, and their resources for comfort and recreational advantages excel what I, or the average boy in my early life in this vicinity, and I was not stinted.

It may be of some account for me to add that the managers and all about the school are strangers to, scarcely recognizable by me, when away from the school; that I do not, never have, and never expect to receive benefit pecuniarily or otherwise from the school referred to, nor any other school. I am confident, however, that great good has been done by education of the soldiers' orphans, and that the work is not yet completed.

Very truly yours,

WM. BELL.

MIFFLINTOWN, PA., *March 4th, 1889.*

Hon. JOHN M. GREER :

DEAR SIR: I have a word to say in defense of the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville, Pa. I have been a frequent visitor at that school for the past ten years. I suppose I have been there fully twenty-five times or more, and I have made it my business to look around the premises, and have made inspection, and I can say that the school has progressed under the present management. I can see no cause for all this disturbance, and the most of it comes from persons who have never visited the school, taking newspaper reports for their texts. I have gone into the school without them knowing anything of my coming, and found the school at dinner or supper—as the case might be—and I always found plenty to eat, and good substantial food. I have asked both boys and girls about their food and I have never heard any complaints. I kept children in my own house one night, as my house has been head-quarters for children and mothers and fathers for years, free of charge, for I know in many cases they were not able to pay hotel bills, and I did it to help them along, and get them free transportation out to the school which is eight miles from the railroad. I have often interrogated them as to their boarding and never heard one complaint. They always told me what they had. I inquired of their treatment by the teachers, and under the present principal, Mr. Sherwood, they always spoke in the highest terms, and all said he was kind to them. When I asked them how they liked Mr. Wright they would speak in the highest terms of him, of his kindness to them. Oftentimes it would be reported to the Post of which I am

a member, and for several years chairman of the soldiers' orphan committee as to the sanitary condition of the boys, that they were bare footed and dirty and ragged. We would go immediately and investigate it, and we found the boys and girls with good shoes. I put the boys into line and inspected as I did my company in the army, and I found their clothes good. I would have them open their coats so I could see as to their cleanliness. I found their shirts good and clean, and their skin clean and no reason for complaint. This I have done repeatedly, and as often as I have been there I have always found the buildings clean and well scrubbed, the floors are white, the beds are kept clean and well aired and plenty of ventilation, and I know that the children have better accommodations than they would have at home. When I say this I know what I am saying from my own knowledge. I cannot see why the public should be so embittered against this school—the only thing about it is that they don't go and see for themselves. They are afraid to go for fear they would not find the school as reported and they would be disappointed. There was a gentleman living in Milflin, he was down on the school and said they ought to be abandoned at once, and he would not be convinced that he was wrong. He said it could not be possible that newspapers would publish the statements if they were not true. I was determined to convince him and I took him out to see for himself. I took him all around—into every room in the building, and showed him every bed and the store room, so that he could see and be convinced that newspapers would publish anything at all to make a market for their papers. Now he says he is a friend of the schools and they ought to be kept open. I could tell you of many such cases as this and of many others that won't speak of it for they are ashamed that they talked as they did. But it seems useless to multiply words. The people would sooner believe a newspaper reporter than a person who knows by personal inspection. I have written several reports and ask them to be used to benefit the public, but as they were favorable to the soldiers's orphan schools they were choked; if they had been unfavorable they would have been published in every sheet in the State, for it would be more popular.

In conclusion I would say, "Let us have peace," and let the management go on and not send out into the world a hundred or more children just to gratify a few people. The children are contented. Break up the school and scatter them and you have a lot of homesick children. They had gotten used to their homes when the Dayton Home was burnt out. I had a dozen of the children at my house, and some of them cried all night—they were homesick. Now they have become satisfied and are doing well.

No, I would say, let them be, as long as the children don't complain and are satisfied nobody has any business to interfere. So I will close for this time, and I hope that after things are investigated and all

prejudice dropped the schools will go on as they have been, for I am satisfied that will not make it any better.

Very respectfully,

C. McCLELLAND.

MIFFLINTOWN, *March 4, 1889.*

Hon. JOHN M. Greer :

DEAR SIR: I have visited the Soldiers' Orphan School at McAlisterville several times on public as well as private occasions, and always found under the present arrangement and management that the children looked healthy and appeared contented. They were well clad, well fed and cleanly. The buildings are clean and well aired. I have inquired of many of the children who are still in the school as well as many Sixteeners, and they all say they were well taken care of, and I feel satisfied that in education they compare favorably with any children in public schools. I have no interest in continuing this or any other soldiers' orphan school further than I am a G. A. R. man and naturally feel an interest in soldiers' orphans. Among the children at McAlisterville school are four whose father's dying request was that I should try to get his children to the school, and I feel perfectly satisfied with their treatment.

I am very truly yours,

J. W. HUGHES.

MIFFLINTOWN, JUNIATA Co., PA., *March 4th, 1889.*

Mr. GREER :

DEAR SIR: I write say that I have been a visitor to the Soldiers' Orphan School, at McAlisterville, at various times. Have avoided special occasions, such as examinations, etc., so as to find the school in its every-day dress and routine of study, work, recitation, etc. Always found much to commend. Children well clad, including substantial shoes; discipline of a high order everywhere; instruction and recitation thorough; buildings clean and air pure. These I have inspected with great care from cellar to garret; beds comfortable and well furnished with bedding. I have also seen the children at their tables; the food was well cooked and varied; on inquiring each one expressed themselves as having all they wished; Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood are highly qualified for the position of superintendent; they seem to manifest a deep interest in the children's welfare.

Respectfully,

A. H. WEIDMAN,
Chaplain Post 134, G. A. R.

P. S.—I have had many personal interviews with the older children; never could get a word of complaint from any of them; always well satisfied with the school and the management. W.

REPORTS OF PHYSICIANS.

McALISTERVILLE, *February 22, 1889.*

Dr. E. E. HIGBEE :

DEAR SIR: The sanitary condition of the McAlisterville Soldiers' Orphan School is to-day as good as I could desire it, or as it could be made in this institution or an institution of this character. I have thoroughly and carefully examined the school buildings, outbuildings and grounds.

The children are allowed the free use of the grounds for play, and they are amply large for any and all their games.

The water closets are clean, are kept supplied with paper for the use of the children and are always in a condition that any one may go in who wishes to use them. The vaults are disinfected with lime every day, are cleaned out every four to six weeks and are sufficiently far removed from all water supplies and the main buildings.

The dormitories of both boys and girls are not over crowded, are well ventilated and clean. The bedding is clean and sweet (there is no musty smell about it) and amply sufficient to keep the children warm in the coldest weather. I have frequently gone into the dormitories when the children were asleep and have yet to find the boy or girl who was not warm unless he had kicked the covering off during his sleep. The play rooms are large and well ventilated. Of necessity these rooms will be crowded if all the boys should congregate in their rooms or all the girls in theirs. The chapel and recitation rooms are not over crowded.

The food is of first quality, substantial, varied and plenty of it.

I may say the school has been in this condition since my connection with it as attending physician, which has been about two years. I recommended a few changes to be made in the drains and privy vaults, which were at once carried out.

Yours respectfully,

W. H. HOPES, M. D.

Dr. Lucien Banks, of Mifflintown, was called as consulting physician. From his report the following extracts are taken :

"There remains the incontrovertible fact that the reports from the citizens of the town where the school is located, best able to judge, are that the boys had food plenty and of a good quality. Besides I had visited their storeroom myself before the authorities could have had time to lay in any additional supplies, and found the provisions

abundant. I ate at the table with the boys and found their food sufficient in quantity and as well prepared and of as good quality as I commonly find in the private families within my practice or elsewhere."

"*Sanitary Condition.*—I visited and inspected the boys' sleeping apartments. There are sixty-two double beds in rooms for about one hundred and ten boys. There are eight beds in other rooms for special occupancy if at any time separation is necessary. On each bed there are four good woolen blankets, one hap and sheets and pillow cases, which I think was amply sufficient. The sheets and pillow cases, and all the bed clothing were clean. On my first visit the boys were in bed and I found their night clothing and underwear clean, and the boys themselves, even their feet, clean, which is by no means *epidemic* among boys generally. Their bed rooms are well ventilated and heat can be supplied by stoves, if necessary. * * * The boys' apparel consists of two school suits and a dress suit for special occasions and a working suit, all good fitting and of good material, sufficiently heavy and warm. The play grounds are sufficiently large, opening out into public roads, and these grounds are surrounded by an open country on three sides." * * *

"I saw no want of care or cleanliness in the surroundings. No filthy deposit from animal or vegetable decomposition, by which the air or water could be affected. * * * I examined a specimen of the water with the intention of analyzing the residuum after the evaporation, but there was no residuum. I made these examinations on my first visit when I was hastily called in consultation, and there could not have been any change of anything from its former condition."

PETITION OF CITIZENS OF McALISTERVILLE AND VICINITY.

McALISTERVILLE, PA., *March 5, 1889.*

To the Superintendent of Soldiers' Orphan Schools, Harrisburg, Pa. :

We, citizens of McAlisterville and vicinity, believing that the Soldiers' Orphan School of this place has been wonderfully and unjustly misrepresented of late, and believing that, under the management of Hon. George W. Wright, the school has, during the past few years, been very much improved in its condition, and that the children are well clothed, well fed and well instructed ; and that they are courteous, mannerly and well behaved ; and believing that the school was never in a better or more prosperous condition than at the present time, do petition and earnestly ask that this school *be not discontinued* because of these misrepresentations, but that it be continued with the same consideration granted to other soldiers' orphan schools :

W. H. Hoopes, M. D.,
Theoph. M. Thompson,
W. W. Sharon,
Sam'l Watts,
Joseph Page,
A. J. Sausman,
David Shirk,
Samuel Wilson,
G. B. Roush,
E. D. Himes,
T. K. Beaver,
Jacob Hassly,
James L. McNaught,
Jacob G. Urney,
P. W. Ford,
Jerome Gingrich,
Philip Weber,
A. Swartzlander,
W. F. Kauffman,
Daniel Smith,
H. H. Kleckner,
William Dunn,
William Grubb,

Wm. Spittler,
Ezra W. Phillips,
James Wilson,
Leo Shellenberger,
W. H. Baughman,
L. W. Sieber,
W. S. Jacobs,
Frank Weber,
James Caveny,
John Afflebach,
S. W. Gingerich,
O. B. Sulouff,
T. S. Entrekin,
Samuel A. Sprout,
G. W. Leisher,
R. W. Ammerman,
Aaron Leidy,
J. Y. Shelley,
C. Benner,
G. W. McAlister,
N. T. Shillingsford,
David Charters,
Enos Haldeman,

Lucian Smith,
 W. J. Shirk,
 J. S. Harley,
 Samuel Rickenbaugh,
 S. J. Warner,
 W. E. Harley,
 L. W. Shirk,
 Wm. V. Shirk,
 H. L. Smith,
 Richard Dunn,
 David Dunn,
 H. K. Hambright,
 E. L. Jamison,
 J. L. Moore,
 Wm. Lyons,
 W. H. Kinzer,
 F. D. Allbaugh,
 D. S. Hostetter,
 A. J. Roush,
 Thad. Musser,
 J. O. Smith,
 Samuel Koons,
 Simon Shellenberger.
 J. A. McAlister,
 John B. McAlister,
 Henry Benner,
 Hale Alexander,
 George F. Van Dever,
 Henry Markel,
 Joseph Sieber,
 Jacob Kramer,
 Jacob Sausman,
 Samuel D. Watts,
 S. L. McAlister,

D. K. Warner,
 R. Caveny,
 W. A. Sizlers,
 Joseph T. Smith,
 E. M. Kelly,
 Emil Leury,
 Noah Smith,
 W. H. McAlister,
 D. M. Jamison,
 L. W. Oler,
 S. S. Stoney.
 J. S. Witmer,
 Wm. H. Keller,
 J. P. Barton,
 Robert Wallace,
 D. H. Smedley,
 J. Bowersox,
 L. S. Kinzer,
 I. M. Jamison,
 Geo. W. Watts,
 D. R. Watts,
 S. H. Kinzer,
 H. L. Bassler,
 Jacob Smith,
 Gideon Kauffman,
 John Bensor,
 John N. Carney,
 D. S. Snyder,
 J. L. Musser,
 Abraham Sausman,
 W. W. Watts,
 C. C. Graybill,
 John Musser.

This petition "is signed by every substantial citizen in the town and near vicinity, and many more could be secured by taking time to extend it into the country around."

